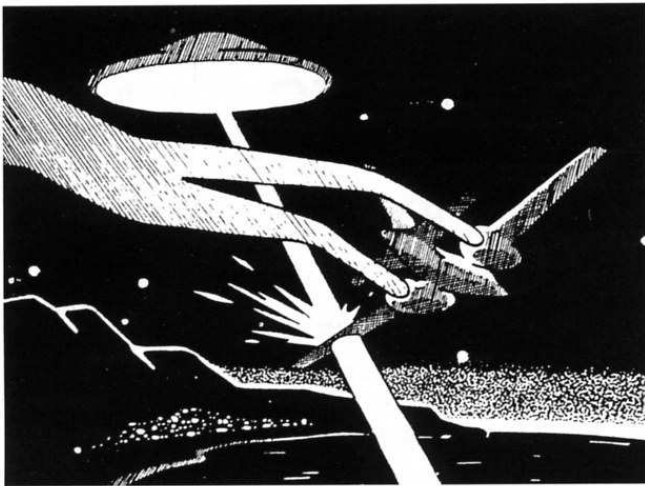


MY ENCOUNTER WITH A UFO

By Lt. Col. Lev Vyatkin
(Russia)

(Fighter Pilot of the 1st Class Lieutenant-Colonel Lev Vyatkin was born in Perm', Russia, on October 20, 1931. In 1953 he finished the Komarov Higher Naval Aviation College in Yeysk, and in 1974 graduated from the Mechnikov State University in Odessa, Ukraine.)



On August 13, 1967 I took off in my interceptor for a training flight. The time was several minutes past 23 hours. I turned on the afterburning in order to climb to 10,000 metres. I manoeuvred the plane to face the beam, determined my location, reported to the Flight Commander and smoothly banked the plane to the left...

It was a calm, moonless night. The bright constellations added to its charm. The plane had performed half of the turn and was facing the sea. The lights of Yalta, a Black Sea resort town, glimmered below along the half-moon of the beach. I made a routine check of the flight instruments. The engine murmured behind my armoured chair. Everything was O.K., the flight conformed to all standard procedures.

At that moment I caught sight of the thing that later kept returning to my memory and troubling me, making me recall the details of my night flight, time and time again, searching for an explanation for what happened then. I saw the Object when I looked up from the instruments: it was a very large oval-shaped object which was somehow fixed to the port of my plane. A strange object so close to my plane could not help but worry me so I requested the Flight Commander, Major Musatov, at once: "Who is in the zone?" He consulted his instruments and answered to my surprise that there was nobody in the zone as all the other planes had already landed.

I banked the plane to the right, trying not to lose sight of the strange object which worried me a lot. Attempting not to approach the object too closely, I tried to determine in what direction it was moving. However, several seconds later its lights went gradually down as if a rheostat switch had been turned off inside.

Meanwhile the plane made a complete right turn and came back to the starting point. I considered my next move and then decided to make the left turn I had planned, trying to be as careful as possible. Hardly had I banked the plane to the left and adjusted the speed and thrust when I saw a flash of bright light from above straight on the course of my plane. Then a slanting milky-white ray appeared in front of my plane. The ray was closing in on the plane. Had I not levelled out, the ray would have hit my fuselage or, to be more

exact, my cockpit.

All the same I hit the ray with the left wing. I was approaching the ray at very high speed, not taking my eyes off it, so I had time to notice and feel something very strange. No sooner had the wing touched the ray than the latter broke into a myriad of tiny sparkles like those you see in a spent firework. The plane shook violently and the instruments read off the scale.

"What's the matter? Is the ray solid?" I thought instinctively, with my eyes still on the strange sparkling pillar which stretched downwards. Soon the light above and the ray below disappeared.

Flying back to the airfield I kept searching the starry skies above for more surprises but everything was quiet. My night flight ended safely. For many days afterwards the surface of the wing which had come into contact with the strange ray shone at nights as if to remind me of the phenomenon.

One knows from experience that there is no such thing as "solid rays". And yet it was I, a pilot, who had happened to encounter the impossible phenomenon in real life. I felt some relief when the popular newspaper "*Komsomolskaya Pravda*" published an article entitled "*Cosmic Ghosts*" (October 17, 1989). The article stated that "solid rays" really existed and I had not been the only person to come into contact with them. V. Selyavkin, the police chief of Voronezh, Russia, described a similar experience he had when he found himself at night on a road in the town suburbs. "Suddenly a ray of light fell down on me from above. It was so bright and powerful that I felt it physically. You won't believe it, but it pinned me to the ground with its weight. Then the ray moved aside and disappeared. I will not forget it as long as I live..." Many other sources mention this phenomenon so characteristic of UFOs. Another feature of the ray is no less strange. It can project itself from a UFO like a telescope support or a probe. It terminates abruptly.

None of the physicists can explain these peculiarities. The nature and functions of the ray are not clear. Is it a ray at all? There is a need for a different name, but what? Which physical laws govern it?

Both the impact on contact and the frantic running of the instrument needles suggest that it is not a

SOVIET UFO SECRETS

The breakup of the former Soviet Union opens up a hidden vault of Iron Curtain UFO files.

A Special Exclusive Report by Bryan Gresh

(Our warmest thanks go to Editor Dennis Stacy and the MUFON Editorial Board for permission to reproduce this article, which appeared in the MUFON UFO Journal for October 1993.

The author, Bryan Gresh, is Senior Vice-President of Altamira Communications Group. He spent 15 years as a television news reporter in a number of markets around the country. Before joining Altamira in January of 1992, Bryan was an anchor/reporter at the CBS affiliate in Las Vegas, KLAS-TV. It was while in Las Vegas that he began working with renowned UFO researcher, George Knapp. Knapp and Gresh have teamed up to produce a series of videotape documentaries on the UFO phenomenon, the first of which will be available later this year. EDITOR, FSR.)

No meeting was ever complete without food. Whether tea and "special occasion" cookies offered by a government biologist who studies reported UFO landing sites, or the homemade cabbage pie served by a retired Red Army colonel who ran an unprecedented ten year study of UFOs in the former Soviet Union, we never left an interview hungry. Our Russian hosts were warm, sincere, friendly and, despite fixed incomes that amounted to little more than 25 or 30 US dollars a month, happy to share a meal with their American visitors. They also shared with us the secrets of decades of study into the UFO phenomenon in the vast Soviet empire.

During our 10-day Russian stay in March of this year, colleague George Knapp and I met, and conducted lengthy interviews with, a previously hidden echelon of researchers and scientists, dedicated professionals who had pursued their interest in UFOs during the long, dark reign of the Communists. Their findings were not known to the outside world — until now. Among our contacts: one of the architects of the Russian "Star Wars" program who emphatically claims the exchange of information between aliens and humans was incorporated in Russian "beam weapon" technology; a Moscow professor who has spent 30 years studying reported UFO landing sites, including many in and around Moscow; a Russian scientist with first-hand knowledge of the reported crash of a UFO near Roswell, New Mexico in 1947; a quiet, shadowy figure who heads the ongoing Ministry of Defense studies into UFOs; and an author and scientist who became, in essence, a non-person for talking publicly about the UFO phenomenon.

The trip to Russia took seven months to set up

and was arranged by our man in Moscow, Nikolai Kapranov. Kapranov is a Russian physicist who served as Security Advisor to the Soviet Parliament. We met Kapranov during a lecture tour of the United States. The UFO subject, it seems, had been talked about for years among Kapranov's circle of friends and associates, including scientists, military officers and KGB operatives. We set Kapranov up in Moscow with an office and a salary and asked him to see what hard information he could find.

What we had hoped, as odd as it sounds, was to find out a little of what America knows about UFOs by talking to the Russians. It has long been assumed that if the US government were secretly monitoring UFOs, the same might be going on in the Soviet Union. If the American government had been stockpiling this information under the national security blanket, maybe the Russians had been doing the same. We all know how little our government has made public on the subject, but this was a new day in Russia. The new freedoms the Russians were experiencing might extend to the subject of UFOs. Maybe the veil of secrecy would be lifted, if only to offer a peek. But it wasn't going to be easy.

When we stepped off the plane at Moscow's airport on that bone-chilling, late winter evening, the New Russia's ongoing political turmoil was as much on our minds as the UFO research we had come to do. The emerging democracy in this post-Communist era had spawned tension and upheaval. During our stay, loud, angry demonstrations were a daily occurrence. It seemed as if with each passing day, Russian President Boris Yeltsin was that much closer to being ousted. On our last day in Moscow, the Russian Parliament was meeting to consider impeachment (a process which, unlike in the United States, could take all of five minutes). Russian Army tanks rolled through the streets, trucks filled with troops convoyed near Red Square. Despite not knowing how, or when, our visit would end, the window of opportunity was open — and the lure was too great.

Long-Term Studies

Stories on UFOs from inside the Soviet Union have filtered out for years. Thanks to the work of Dr. Richard Haines, Jacques Vallée, Bruce Maccabee, Paul Stonehill and others, solid indications have surfaced of long-term, large scale UFO studies. Our goal was to talk, face to face, with those who were in the know, knowledgeable individuals who had not been quoted in the Western press